

Behind the Star

Alexandria Sheriff's Office Quarterly Newsletter
Fourth Quarter 2013



Committed to Breast Cancer Awareness

While members of the Alexandria Sheriff's Office have long been supporters of raising awareness about breast cancer, the death of one of their own during the summer prompted staff to step up their efforts in memory of Deputy Amy Clinton (right).

Deputy Clinton died on Wednesday, July 17 following a courageous fight against breast cancer. She was survived by her husband and their six children.

Deputy Clinton joined the Sheriff's Office in July 2007 and graduated from the Northern Virginia Criminal Justice Training Academy in June 2008. Working in the William G. Truesdale Adult Detention Center, Deputy Clinton served most of her career with Team 1B but was also assigned for a short time with Team 2B. In March 2012, she was elevated to Deputy Sheriff II.

The Sheriff's Office honored Deputy Clinton's memory by lowering the Office's flag to half-staff and shrouding their badges for a two-week period. The Honor Guard provided an official presence at her memorial service on Saturday, July 27, and her fellow members on Team 1B, as well as Sheriff Dana Lawhorne and dozens of other caring coworkers, attended the service and repast. (Continued inside)



Message from the Sheriff



In November, I had the humbling honor of being re-elected to serve as your Sheriff, and on New Year's Eve, Clerk of Circuit Court Edward Semonian (above) administered my oath to begin my third term. Being your Sheriff is a great source of pride but one that carries a great responsibility so I thank you for your continued confidence and support as I eagerly look forward to the next four years.

While I'm very impressed by the commitment of our staff on a daily basis, their personal dedication to the Office, each other and the community was especially evident this fall as many of them participated in breast cancer awareness efforts. After losing a treasured member of our Office family to the disease and seeing others fighting it, staff participated in several events to raise awareness and to honor the memory of Deputy Amy Clinton.

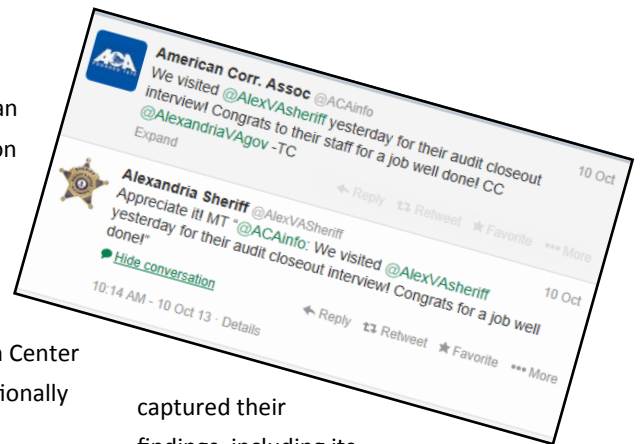
You'll also read about important ways we continue to partner with public safety agencies and community groups – from helping to deliver Meals on Wheels to running Project Lifesaver to efforts for children with Operation Warm and Toys for Tots. To be able to continue and hopefully expand on this work over the next four years is a challenge I'm embracing.

Thank you again for your trust.

ACA Audit

In October, assessors for the American Correctional Association's Commission on Accreditation for Corrections (CAC) visited the Sheriff's Office to conduct an audit as part of the reaccreditation process for the William G. Truesdale Adult Detention Center to determine its compliance with nationally established jail standards.

Three assessors toured the jail and grounds, reviewed files, and interviewed staff and contract employees as part of the audit process which lasted three days. After completing their on-site assessment, the team prepared a written report which



captured their findings, including its determination that the Adult Detention Center was in 100% compliance with all applicable mandatory standards and with 97.1% on non-mandatory standards. The formal award was presented in February 2014 at the ACA annual winter conference.

Promoting Seat Belt Use by Deputies

Deputy David Hoffmaster is one of the latest Virginia law enforcement officers to appear in safety campaign posters developed by the Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police (VACP) to encourage seat belt use by fellow officers. VACP's design features the message of "Wear this, Not this" across a photo of an officer wearing a seat belt and an opposite one of a shrouded badge, a symbol indicating a duty-related officer death.

According to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, nearly 50 percent

of law enforcement officers killed in vehicle crashes since the early 1980s were not wearing seat belts or other safety restraints. The VACP received a grant to promote seat belt usage among Virginia law enforcement officers and localities have been encouraged to take part in the campaign.

The posters of Deputy Hoffmaster are being displayed in employee lounges, the staff's roll call room and locker rooms at the Sheriff's Office and at the Alexandria Courthouse where deputies will see them and be reminded to buckle up.



WEAR THIS...



NOT THIS...



Traffic crashes continue to be a major cause of death for Virginia law enforcement officers —
DON'T TAKE CHANCES WITH YOUR LIFE!

BUCKLE UP... for your family, for your fellow officers, and for everyone you serve and protect.

Produced by the Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police. Supported in part by National Highway Transportation Safety Administration Grant #2013-53458



Deputies Honor Memory of Colleague by Promoting Awareness

(continued from front) The Alexandria Sheriff's Association presented Deputy Clinton's family with a shadow box featuring a pink badge and an inscription recognizing her dedicated service to the Office and her "daily demonstration of leadership, ability and friendship."



A few weeks later, deputies and civilian colleagues began wearing pink band bracelets (above) that had Deputy Clinton's name and her badge number impressed on them as a tribute to her memory.

Then, in October, deputies showed their support in the fight against breast cancer by wearing their own special pink badges (upper

right) with a message in the center reading "Arrest Breast Cancer" and "Unlock the Cure." Sheriff Lawhorne authorized deputies to wear the custom-made badges throughout October, which was designated as National Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

Deputies ordered and paid for the badges themselves in memory of Deputy Clinton and in honor of several other deputies who are breast cancer survivors. Deputies wearing the pink badges received a very positive response from members of other law enforcement agencies and City departments, and from members of the public.

Finally, more than thirty members of the Sheriff's Office, as well as members of Deputy Clinton's family, teamed up as "Amy's Angels" for the Alexandria Walk to Fight Breast Cancer on Saturday, October 26, to raise awareness and money for preventative care.



Inmate Holiday Programs

The Sheriff's Office conducted two special monthly programs for inmates to give them a way to celebrate the spirit of the holidays.



Both events – a Thanksgiving tribute on Thursday, November 21 and a winter holiday program on Thursday, December 19 – featured musical performances by inmates and by Jacqueline Jones (above), a City of Alexandria Finance Department employee who is also a member of the City choir.

Some inmates read original works, like Joshua Mann (below) who shared a poem expressing what he is thankful for. Others, like Karina Ortega, Rungnatee Pearson, Jamille Ferguson and Leslie Cradle, sang songs that reflected the essence of the holidays.



Spreading the Holiday Spirit

The Sheriff's Office shared the holiday spirit by supporting community efforts and partnering with other City departments. Deputy Valarie Wright (below) helped with Project Thanksgiving, a regional effort to provide families in need with complete Thanksgiving dinners. On Tuesday, November 26, Deputy Wright picked up 16 Thanksgiving dinners with turkeys and all the fixings from Lockheed Martin in Manassas and then delivered them to Hopkins House so they could be distributed to deserving families.

That same day, Sheriff Dana Lawhorne, Undersheriff Tim Gleeson and Deputy Todd Stubblefield were among the public safety personnel who attended the WHUR-Steve Harvey Foundation turkey basket giveaway at the Lee Center.

Deputies George Wooden, William L. Morgan and Valarie Wright and the Inmate Work Detail (IWD) assisted Officer Marcus Downey with the delivery of more than 500 Christmas trees that were sold to benefit the Alexandria Police Youth Camp. On Tuesday, November 26, inmates unloaded hundreds of trees from a truck and helped set them up for sale in the parking lot at Union Station. The annual Christmas tree sale raises money to send kids to the Alexandria Police Youth Camp.



The IWD (above) helped make Old Town look its most festive by decorating King Street with holiday garland and ribbons on Tuesday, December 3, on behalf of Old Town Business and Professional Association.



Inmate Artwork, Crafts Exhibited at Art on the Avenue

Inmate Services staff exhibited inmate artwork at Art on the Avenue, the popular annual event in Del Ray, on Saturday, October 5, and more than 500 festival goers stopped by the Sheriff's Office tent and voted for their favorite.



Staff also displayed crocheted baby blankets crafted by Detention Center inmates in an education and life skills

program specifically for women. The blankets, along with caps and booties, are donated to Inova Alexandria Hospital for mothers and newborns to take home.

Before having their artwork exhibited at Art on the Avenue, eleven inmates had their drawings – created in ink, pencil and/or color pencil – displayed at an art show at the William G. Truesdale Adult Detention Center where their fellow inmates voted for the artwork they liked best. Pat Miller, longtime chief organizer of Art on the Avenue and former chair of the Alexandria Commission for the Arts, attended the inmate art show and addressed the audience, applauding the creativity of the inmates who took part in the exhibition.

Artwork by Jose Victor Campbell (above right) took top honors in both the Art on the Avenue voting and the inmate voting. Second and third place prizes were also awarded with



the winners earning credit to their jail accounts for personal expenses like snacks, postage and hygiene items.

For more information about this program or to volunteer to work with inmates, please contact Cheryle Echane at 703.746.5079.

Operation Elf Helps Children of Inmates

Thanks to the kind support of Toys for Tots, the children of 54 Alexandria inmates received holiday gifts and, if needed, warm winter accessories over the holiday season.



Through Operation Elf, Inmate Services staff distributed on Wednesday, December 11, new toys, hand-crafted hats, and warm gloves to be given to inmates' children as holiday gifts.

Each year, Toys for Tots provides the Sheriff's Office with donated toys so that children of inmates in the William G. Truesdale Adult Detention Center who cannot afford to purchase gifts will receive a toy during holiday celebrations. This year Toys for Tots of Quantico provided enough new toys for 163 children.

Members of the Inmate Services staff also crocheted more than 50 winter caps, generously donating their own time and talent to create special gifts for inmates' kids.

Several weeks earlier, Inmate Services staff contacted inmates to identify those who had



children who might benefit from Operation Elf. Eligible inmates then provided staff with the age and gender of their children, as well as the name of a family member or guardian who would be picking out the toys and winter accessories. The designated family members then visited the Sheriff's Office where staff assisted them in selecting toys and warm hats and gloves.

Alexandria Sheriff's Office:

The Sheriff's Office helped the Community Partners for Children with their annual Toy Drive by delivering toy collection bins to shops, banks, restaurant, places of worship and City facilities. Deputy Valarie Wright (below) labeled and distributed dozens of collection bins that were soon filled with toys and children's clothing for Alexandria families in need.



Businesses have been opening at the new Yates Corner development near the Braddock Road Metro and Sheriff Dana Lawhorne, seen here with businessman Jason Yates, was the first customer when the 7-Eleven opened its doors on Monday, December 30.



Deputy Robert Gilmore (left) was one of several deputies providing high visibility patrols across the City to help keep Halloween trick-or-treaters safe. Additional deputies assisted police on foot at the popular neighborhood event on South Lee Street.

In Touch With Our Community



The Sheriff's Office teamed up again with Alexandria Police for another successful Drug Take Back Day on Saturday, October 26. Deputy George Burnham (left) staffed the drop-off site in Del Ray outside the Neighborhood Pharmacy on Mount Vernon Avenue and, combined with two other locations, local law enforcement collected 243 pounds of unwanted medication.



Several members of the Sheriff's Office participated in the 2013 Scottish Walk on Saturday, December 7. Deputies assisted police with directing vehicle and pedestrian traffic, and Sheriff Dana Lawhorne, the Honor Guard and the Motor Team (above) participated in the parade. This marked the second year in a row that Lieutenant Brian de Souza and Sergeant Anthony Zygmunt rode in the Scottish Walk.

Reaching Out to Seniors

The Sheriff's Office continued its commitment to serving seniors by participating in community education events and providing support to Meals on Wheels.



Senior Services of Alexandria hosted its annual Senior Law Day on Saturday,

October 19 to educate seniors about programs and assistance available to improve their quality of life and help keep them secure. Deputy Marybeth Plaskus (left) staffed a table to share information about the Sheriff's Office and particularly Project Lifesaver which can help lead to the safe recovery of participants who may wander due to conditions like Alzheimer's (see below for more on Project Lifesaver).

Senior Services also coordinates Meals on Wheels in Alexandria and when snowy conditions prevented some drivers from making their Meals on Wheels deliveries on Tuesday, December 10, the Sheriff's Office was prepared to fill in.

Deputy Marvin Pitts dropped off food to seniors in the West End and Deputy Valarie Wright (right) delivered meals to downtown residents.

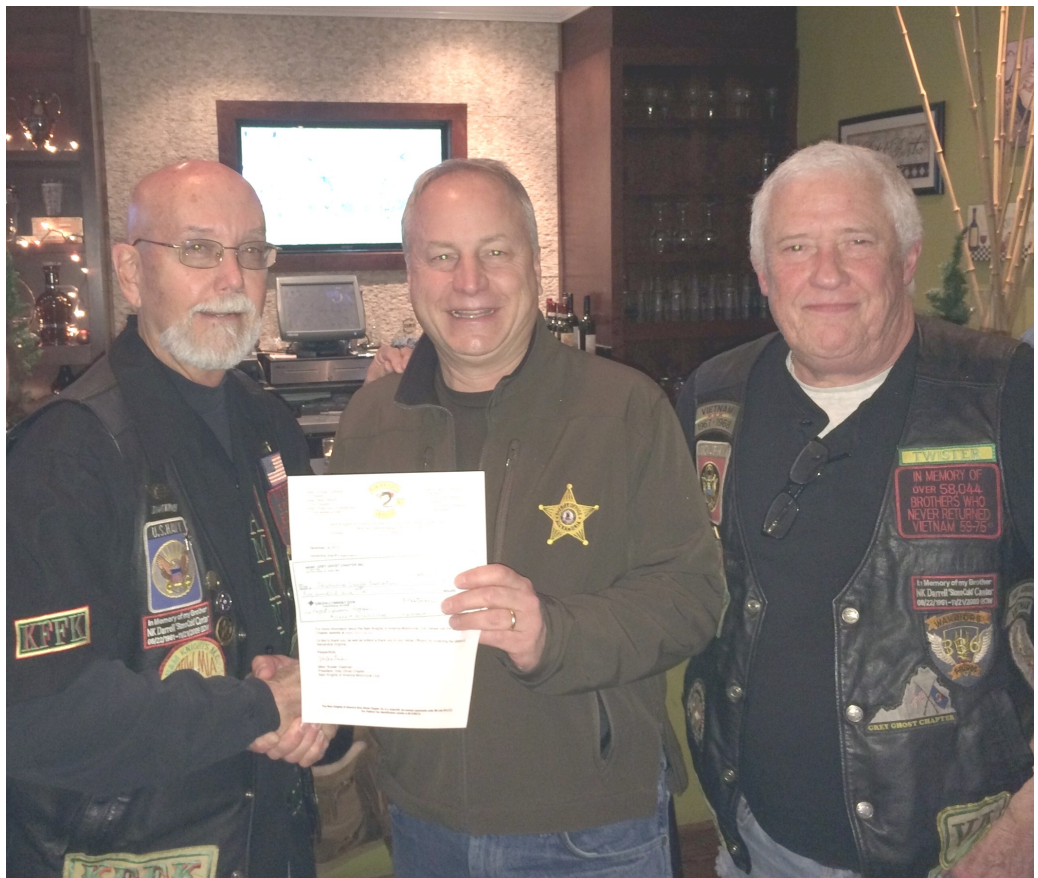


Community Support for Project Lifesaver

The Grey Ghost Chapter of the Nam Knights of America Motorcycle Club showed its support for public safety by making a donation to Project Lifesaver, a program to help rescue participating adults and children who wander due to Alzheimer's, autism, Down syndrome and other related conditions or disorders.

On Saturday, December 14, Chapter President Mike Eastman and club member Mike Mallon presented Sheriff Dana Lawhorne with a check for \$500 at Del Ray Pizzeria to help cover the purchase and maintenance of transmitter bracelets worn by Project Lifesaver clients. The club promotes public service work and its members include active duty and veteran service members and law enforcement personnel.

The Sheriff's Office launched Project Lifesaver locally in 2008 with support from the Kelley Cares Foundation, which also made a generous donation of \$5000 in 2013.



Office Salutes Volunteers

The Sheriff's Office paid tribute to its dedicated volunteers at the annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon on Tuesday, October 29. More than 200 volunteers provide religious services, Bible study, substance abuse recovery programs, tutoring, and even yoga and meditation to inmates at the William G. Truesdale Adult Detention Center.

About 50 volunteers attended the luncheon at First Baptist Church and enjoyed a video featuring inmates expressing their thanks to volunteers who work with them (below right).

Keynote speaker Mondre' Kornegay, Technical Services Commander for the Sheriff's Office, applauded the volunteers for their service and asked them to acknowledge how special they really are for not only sharing their time and skills, but for working with inmates who truly need them.

Commander Kornegay then joined Sheriff Dana Lawhorne in presenting each volunteer with a certificate of appreciation and a small gift (above right). Sheriff Lawhorne closed the event by expressing his admiration and gratitude to the committed corps of volunteers.



Support for Operation Warm

The Sheriff's staff once again supported the efforts of Operation Warm this winter. The Alexandria Sheriff's Association donated \$250 to help provide new winter coats to children

in Alexandria and on Saturday, November 16, deputies joined community volunteers in distributing more than 400 coats to families in need at the Operation Warm event at Charles Houston Recreation Center organized by Fairfax County Fire Captain Willie Bailey.

Lieutenant Deborah Vaughan (right) assisted families as they arrived, giving wrist bands to kids who needed coats. Deputy Valarie Wright worked at a table, helping families as their children tried on coats to make sure they got the right fit. Sergeant Felicia Mensah, who personally donated money in a show of support, helped out at the distribution tables.

Several families also received donations of food baskets in anticipation of Thanksgiving.



Staff News

Congratulations to Captain Frank Milano and Rose Barnes, two longtime employees with nearly 70 years of service between them, on their retirement from the Sheriff's Office on Tuesday, December 31.



Captain Milano (above) joined the Sheriff's Office in 1983 and had most recently served as the senior commander at the William G. Truesdale Adult Detention Center. He celebrated his retirement with a catered luncheon at the Lee Center.



Mrs. Barnes (above) worked in the Circuit Court Clerk's Office for 31 years before joining the Sheriff's Office administrative staff in 2007. She will celebrate with a luncheon at the Durant Center in March.

Deputies Graduate from Academy

Three deputy sheriffs graduated from Session 129 of the Northern Virginia Criminal Justice Training Academy on Friday, December 20 at a ceremony at George Mason University.



Deputies Christopher Boucher, Joseph Bowman and Jessica Duenas successfully completed 24 weeks of law enforcement officer training including emergency vehicle operation, firearms training, defensive tactics, crash investigation, basic legal training and other important areas, as well as four additional weeks of training in jail and courthouse procedures.

After the formal program, Sheriff Dana Lawhorne shared in the celebration by taking a group selfie with the graduates.

The deputies have since returned to regular duties at the William G. Truesdale Adult Detention Center, with Deputy Bowman assigned to Team 2B and Deputies Boucher and Duenas assigned to Team 2A.

Patrol Refresher Training Completed

In November, the final group of deputies completed the mandatory biannual Patrol Refresher Training. Deputies assigned to Judicial and Special Operations spent Veterans Day, when courts are closed, receiving instruction and conducting practical exercises at the Northern Virginia Criminal Justice Training Academy.

Throughout the year, the Training Unit ensured that sworn staff completed online

lessons and hands-on and practical exercises, such as defensive tactics drills, active shooter response, and scenarios involving high-risk traffic stops and breaking up fights.

The Training Unit used volunteers and available staff as role players and then observed and evaluated how deputies handled the scenarios. Online training reviewed radio procedures, City geography, and look-out transmission and response.



Deputy Cole Named CIT Deputy of the Year

Alexandria's Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) held its annual awards luncheon on Tuesday, November 12 at Alexandria Police headquarters to honor four Crisis Intervention Team members, including Deputy Michael Cole.

Deputy Cole was recognized for his dedication to the CIT program where he also serves as a trainer. Because of his recent assignment in the Warrant Unit, Deputy Cole regularly worked with members of the general public and could recognize the warning signs of persons experiencing a behavioral health crisis. Many of the people he arrested on outstanding warrants had either mental health or substance abuse issues, so his CIT training was invaluable as he interacted with them.



Further, because he worked on the streets, he was able to back up police officers who needed CIT assistance when dealing with at-risk residents. Deputy Cole also used his CIT training when transporting inmates with mental health issues to and from state hospitals and court appearances.

Optimist Club Honors Deputy Diaz

Deputy Andrea Diaz was one of three Alexandria law enforcement officers honored by the Optimist Club of Alexandria for their contributions to public safety and to the community. At a luncheon at Belle Haven Country Club on Wednesday, October 23, Optimist Club President Sue Wilson presented Deputy Diaz, and Alexandria Police Sergeant Charles Seckler and Detective Brad Cecchetti the "Respect for Law" award in recognition of their distinguished service.

Lieutenant Doug Woehlke, Deputy Diaz's commander on Team 1B, shared some examples of Deputy Diaz's volunteer work and dedicated community service. As a volunteer with the Virginia Insurance Counseling and Assistance Program in the Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS), she provides seniors with important information on Medicare benefits.

She is also active with the DCHS Holiday Sharing Program, coordinating the



participation of the Alexandria Sheriff's Association in sponsoring a family in need in 2012 and serving on the 2013 planning committee.

Deputy Diaz also volunteers as a tutor, recently working in an Arlandria program for children and families, previously mentoring students at Jefferson-Houston Elementary School and spending time with kids at the Alexandria Police Youth Camp.

Deputy Recognized by FBI

Former colleagues of Sergeant Mark Jessup recognized him for his years of leadership with the Gang and Corrections Subcommittee of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments.



Before his promotion earlier in 2013, Sergeant Jessup served in the Sheriff's Office Gang Intelligence Unit and was an important part of the Subcommittee, serving several years as the chair. At bimonthly meetings, the members exchanged information about gang affiliations and activities of those who are incarcerated to minimize their influence in jails and on the outside. They also held a very successful regional conference in 2012 which Sergeant Jessup co-organized.

At their meeting on Friday, October 11, members of the subcommittee thanked Sergeant Jessup for his dedicated service and Special Agent Mark Murawski presented him with certificates on behalf of the FBI. Deputy Joseph Runquist, who now represents the Sheriff's Office on the subcommittee, also attended.

Community Groups Honor Sheriff's Office

Important community-based organizations recognized the commitment of the Sheriff's Office and its Inmate Work Detail (IWD) in improving the quality of life and supporting local events.

Last April the Sheriff's Office partnered with other City agencies for Litter Enforcement Month, an initiative from the Alice Ferguson Foundation. The coordinated effort to protect the Potomac watershed by targeting littering and illegal dumping in Alexandria paid off and on Friday, October 18, the Alice Ferguson Foundation honored the City with the Potomac Champion Award.

While Code Administration's team worked closely with Police and Transportation and Environmental Services to identify and address areas for dumping and trash accumulation, the Sheriff's Office deployed the IWD to collect litter on the grounds of the Beatley and Burke libraries, Van Dorn Metro, and Hammond Middle School, and along Mount Vernon Avenue, in Hume Springs and Four Mile Park, and at the cemetery on North Breckinridge. Under the direct supervision of a deputy, the four-man crew collected approximately 900 pounds of trash during Litter Enforcement Month.



Photo by B. Townsend

At the Alice Ferguson Foundation's Trash Summit, Deputy James Velez (above) joined representatives from Code Administration and the Police Department in accepting the Potomac Champion Award on behalf of the City.

Then on Monday, December 16, the Del Ray Business Association (DRBA) presented the Office with its Star Award in appreciation of the IWD's efforts in Del Ray, including set-up

and break-down for special events, like Art on the Avenue and the Halloween Parade, and beautification and litter control work along Mount Vernon Avenue.

Sheriff Dana Lawhorne, Captain Doug Schuler, Deputy George Wooden and Deputy James Velez accepted the Star Award from DRBA Board Members Gayle Reuter and Pat Miller at DRBA's annual holiday luncheon (below left).



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